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Department of State

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INFO LOG-08 AOS-08 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODD-00 NSCE-00
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E.O. 12350: N/A
TAGS: PREL, SA, CH, US PA Exemptions
SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON SAUDI ARABIA'S CHINESE
MISSILE ACQUISITION

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Tue 1/27/93

1. FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE APPROVED FOR USE IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SUBJECT MISSILE ACQUISITION. EMBASSY IS INSTRUCTED TO CONSULT WITH THE DEPARTMENT BEFORE RESPONDING DIRECTLY TO ANY SUCH QUESTIONS.

2. Q. HAS SAUDI ARABIA ACQUIRED A NEW CHINESE INTERMEDIATE RANGE SURFACE TO SURFACE MISSILE SYSTEM WHICH IS CAPABLE OF DELIVERING A NUCLEAR WARHEAD?

A. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA CONCERNING INDICATIONS THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS ACQUIRING SUCH A MISSILE SYSTEM FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE ACQUISITION OF SUCH A SYSTEM IS NOT IN THE INTERESTS OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION.

THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA HAS CONFIRMED THAT IT IS ACQUIRING AN INTERMEDIATE RANGE SURFACE TO SURFACE MISSILE SYSTEM BUT HAS ASSURED US CATEGORICALLY AT THE

VERY HIGHEST LEVEL THAT SAUDI ARABIA DOES NOT HAVE, NOR DOES IT INTEND TO ACQUIRE, ANY NUCLEAR CAPABILITY. THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA HAS STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT IT WILL NOT EXPORT NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO ANY GOVERNMENT. WE ACCEPT THESE ASSURANCES.

Q. DOES THIS MISSILE SYSTEM POSE A THREAT TO ISRAEL?

A. THE MISSILE SYSTEM WOULD HAVE A RANGE WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ALL AREAS OF THE MIDDLE EAST. IT IS ANOTHER PART OF A DISTURBING REGIONAL TREND IN SURFACE TO SURFACE MISSILE PROLIFERATION. THE SUM TOTAL OF THE PROLIFERATION IS A DEGRADATION OF THE SECURITY OF ALL STATES IN THE REGION.

Q. WHAT ARE WE ASKING THE SAUDIS TO DO NOW THAT THEIR ACQUISITION OF THIS SYSTEM HAS COME TO LIGHT?

A. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA ON THIS MATTER. I WILL NOT GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THESE EXCHANGES.

Q. HAVE WE TALKED TO THE ISRAELIS OR THE CHINESE?

A. I DO NOT INTEND TO DISCUSS OUR EXCHANGES ANY